

COMMENTS TO WMATA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
KATHY PORTER, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK
OCTOBER 25, 2007

The City of Takoma Park is very concerned that this board appears ready to make a decision on a development plan for the Takoma Metro Station, without having taken into account the serious issues raised by the City or by Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett. County Executive Leggett sent the WMATA General Manager a series of letters asking that this decision be postponed until key pedestrian and vehicular safety issues could be addressed by all parties working together.

In our view, the most serious issues are:

- The plan does not provide the 12 bus bays recommended by the Takoma Transportation plan, which was jointly funded by the District of Columbia Department of Transportation and the City of Takoma Park.
- Buses and cars must share the only bus turnaround and the main access road to the parking lot.
- Pedestrian access to the station entrances is not safe and there are several places where pedestrians must cross wide vehicular paths.
- Passengers with disabilities have too long a path to the station elevator, this path is exposed to the elements, and there is no direct sight line from the drop off site to the entrance to the elevator tunnel.
- The proposed parking facility is not designed to accommodate the same number of cars as the current parking lot. The developer maintains that some additional parking will be available on the street in front of the townhouses – which assumes that the residents of the townhouses will not park in front of their homes.
- Shared bike/pedestrian paths are too narrow and the plan provides for fewer bike lockers than are currently on the site and places them in locations inconvenient for bicyclists. The regional Metropolitan Branch Trail is planned to pass right by the station and undoubtedly many people will ride bicycles to the station.
- The Kiss-and-Ride facilities are too far from the station entrance and the elevator entrance.

We respect the District of Columbia's right to determine development on the site. Our concern is access to transit. As Mayor of the City of Takoma Park, I must stand up for my community's right to get to the Metro system through the Takoma Station. More than half the transit riders entering the Takoma Metro Station are from Maryland, and you as WMATA Board members should be putting the interests of transit riders first.